

# Working with Youth as a common framework for cooperation between participating organisations

**Name of the organisation**

Raunas novada bērnu un jauniešu centrs

**Website of the organisation**

<https://www.facebook.com/RaunasJC/>

**Location of the organisation**

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### **Good practice aspect(s)/themes of youth work**

- Participation of young people in activities (planning, preparing, carrying out, etc.)
- Participation of young people in decision making
- Non-formal education/-learning
- Recognition/validation of learning
- Human rights
- Discrimination
- Inclusion
- Diversity
- Active citizenship/activism
- Intercultural understanding
- Environmental/climate
- Employability
- Entrepreneurship
- Arts and culture
- Sports
- Outdoor activities
- Youth information and counselling
- Digital and information literacy
- Cross sectorial cooperation
- European/International cooperation/projects
- Community work
- Youth work in rural areas
- Digital youth work
- Volunteering/voluntarism
- Competence development of youth workers
- Administration
- Organisation
- Planning
- Documentation
- Follow up/evaluation
- Research
- Policymaking
- Lobbying/advocacy for youth work
- Sustainable development

### **Good practice category**

### **Good practice aim & purpose**

At the time of the introduction of the practice, the head of the youth centre also became deputy school director for non-formal education. The challenge was to change the past practice of the deputy director position, which was out of class action and parenting work. At the moment, the deputy director took care to integrate non-formal education methods into the learning process, by offering them to school teachers, to organise the introduction of a number of international non-formal educational programmes at school, such as MOT and Award. This deputy works on common information systems in the field of interest education, reducing competition between the various activities, adapting sites and times, including both the offer of school, the supply of youth centres and leading entrepreneurs, and took care of the development of the public environment and the sharing of good practices. In Latvia's state education system, this is unprecedented and therefore the biggest challenge. These activities help to develop communication with young people regarding their free time, encourage greater involvement of young people in the development and improvement of the learning process, in the reduction of consumer society and significantly improve the motivation of young people to learning how to learn – being in the process, being able to set and achieve goals.

### **Good practice description**

*Please describe your good practice based on the above given information (Explain your practice as such, in 'technical' terms and as clear and simple as possible.)*

In cooperation with the school and its director, close cooperation was established with the youth centre, thus bringing non-formal education methods into the formal environment of the school. During the introduction of the practice, an informal education area was established at a school where it is possible to spend full time in adult supervision, playing targeted games, implementing their own initiatives and engaging in the development and improvement of teaching work and the environment. In implementing this system, the school self-government also gained leadership by receiving methodical support for team building, project management and implementation, priority setting, resource identification and other relevant topics. Young people are positioned as actors whose results depend on the size and quality of their own actions. In parallel, this process has reinforced teacher training issues in non-formal education by organising teacher self-development courses that recall topics such as communication forms, emotional intelligence, practice-based learning, adult responsibility and sequence of actions and others. Such activities contribute to the teacher's role as an adult in the eyes of the young, by improving the existing association, which called for the teacher to be regarded as a rule-setter rather than an assistant. The combination of formal and non-formal education methods in a formal education institution contributes to the smooth development of a young person, making him an educated member of society, who is in parallel a targeted, independent, compassionate, collaborative, inclusive and versatile young man capable of being a full member of society and a competitive employee in any area of his interest.

*Please describe eventual challenges and problems related to the creation, implementation, and/or running of your good practice? (Explain the eventual difficulties that you have come across, so that others know what to think about if they want to implement your practice.)*

The main problems are the experience and practices of teachers and organizational leaders, which have developed on a completely different form of education system. The biggest challenge is to be patient learners and to be able to build support systems for both teachers and young people at this time. The awareness of adult responsibility and forms of adult action are crucial, which have a significant impact on young people's thinking, decision-making and action. And in this context, the

challenge is to raise awareness among educators about the processes of this time, which differ from their past understanding and to create a successful synergy between their experience and modern trends.

*Please give the names, roles and tasks of eventual partners involved in the creation, implementation and/or running of your good practice.*

At the heart of the implementation of any system, it is important to identify all stakeholders so that the objectives can be achieved in a meaningful way. And if there is a young person at the centre of the institution, it cannot be worked without cooperation with other institutions with young people at the centre. Therefore, the youth centre of Rauna municipality, in developing the youth strategy, set up a cooperation group comprising the municipality council, the social service, the county school, the school pupils council, the school parents' council and youth workers, as well as the heads of all these institutions. This cooperation group also developed the practice described above, which extended the circle with pupils, teachers and school staff. It is the responsibility of each party to recognise and update its operational objectives leading to shared values in working with young people. The agreement on common values extends the possibility of cooperation between formal and non-formal education as organisations go in the same direction.

*Please give an overview of the resources needed in order to establish and run your good practice. (Please describe the human, financial and other resources that are needed. Please also explain if you have got external financing from sources available for others, and if so, from what funding scheme(s).)*

At the beginning of this system, one practical consideration was a meaningful realisation of financial resources, since so far a number of institutions have been working on similar activities for one purpose, without real efficiency, dividing the same actors. The institutions are self-government-funded institutions with their own available budget, but the development of a single institutional cooperation platform led to a reallocation of financial resources, a review of workloads, pooling and optimisation of workloads in both institutions, thereby significantly reducing the inefficient use of each institution's finances. The school is a self-government body that receives national co-financing, a youth centre funded by the local government, involving national and European funding for specific activities at different levels.

### **Good practice result & concrete effects**

*For young people:*

The main benefits of creating a common framework for working with youth are the accessibility of young people, the effectiveness of disseminating information and the development of activities. The separate functioning of the institutions essentially provided basic formal education needs and youth centres as a place of leisure without added value, including the inappropriate use of funding to the little-attended targeted activities. Work on youth is currently taking place at the needs of young people and in the spotlight that can only be identified by working in a single framework. These practices also significantly increase the confidence of young people as regards the ability to compete for young people from rural areas, both through education and participation in interest education and through projects.

*For youth workers:*

Youth workers have now gained more resources in the pursuit of ideas, since some of the activities involve different groups, such as classrooms, teachers, school staff, parents, school management and older young people. At present, the work of youth workers has become more targeted and meaningful, contributing to productivity and motivation at work and expanding the scope of professional development.

*For your organisation as such:*

The organisation has gained greater visibility among the local community and young people, gained more leadership support, developed new cooperation projects related to the introduction of non-formal education in formal education, and new projects are being developed at both international and national level. There has been a significant increase in the number of visitors to the organisation, and there has been a significant increase in publicity for the projects carried out, where more young people have participated accordingly. It is also important to optimise financial resources that have affected the budget of both the school and youth centre in terms of measures, staff salaries and room maintenance costs.

*For youth work in general:*

An example of our practice at this level is, for the time being, the only example in Latvia, so we have gained more opportunity to share our practices with a great deal of interest and, relatively often, take other youth specialists on exchange trips and make good practice examples for publications in order to raise awareness of youth work and the opportunities of youth workers to improve joint work with young people, also in formal education institutions. Youth employees share experience by conducting classes in seminars and conferences of the youth, school and school council of different regions of Latvia, promoting the involvement of young people in teaching through the opinion of pupils, etc.

*For society/your community in general:*

The implementation of this system makes it much easier to create a common understanding of the system for society by promoting the involvement of citizens in the pursuit of young people's ideas, the involvement of entrepreneurs in support of young people, the involvement of older and school-leaving young people in various initiatives that are important to young people.

*Other, please specify:*

These practices are generally unprecedented in Latvia, and this direction can also help others in preparing for the introduction of the new education system in Latvia. It is very important to understand the specific nature of each institution to work in the same direction, implementing common systems and sharing values, but not to forget the individual objectives and actions of each institution, so it is important to think about a lot of detail before taking the first steps and to discuss it with all parties involved.

**Good practice chapter of the European Charter on Local Youth Work**